

*Safety Planning
For Domestic Violence Victims*



*Hillsborough County
Victim Assistance Program*

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272-6423*

**As a victim of domestic violence,
our hope is that you will use
this booklet to become a survivor
of domestic violence.**

A Safety Plan is a personalized
plan to help you and your
children stay safe while planning
to leave and after leaving an
abusive relationship.

After reading this booklet,
please contact the Domestic
Violence Program for any
additional assistance at
272-6423.

We want you to be safe!

What is Domestic Violence?

Domestic Violence is a serious crime. It includes behaviors like pushing, grabbing, poking, pinching, hitting, punching and threats to harm. It includes being touched in any unwanted way. Persons who may be included in domestic violence cases are:

- Husband or wife
- Parent of your child
- A family member
- Someone you have lived with as a family

If you are abused, what are your options?

- Call 911 in an emergency.
- File a police report about the violence.
- Consider getting an Injunction for Protection. The Court will order the abuser to stay away from you.
- See a doctor for injuries. Be sure to tell the doctor the cause of the injuries.
- Document the abuse, get pictures.
- Talk to a friend, family member, neighbor or someone else for support and ask for help.
- Call the domestic violence shelter to talk, get information or ideas, or to help you make a safety or escape plan.

If you plan to leave a violent relationship:

It is always best to plan for emergencies – before you leave:

- Plan how you will get away from the abuser or have help come to you.
- Establish a distress code with family and friends.
- Ask a neighbor to call the police if violence begins.
- Hide any weapons.
- Plan where you'll go, if you choose or are forced to leave.
- Plan for the needs of your children and pets.
- Get your escape bag ready.



**FREE EMERGENCY
CELL PHONES ARE
AVAILABLE.**

Contact the State Attorney's Domestic
Violence Program or The Spring of
Tampa Bay.

Remember . . .

- Everyone is different and your safety plan should cover your personal situation.
- Keep your plan in a safe place (at work, a friend's home, etc.).
- Put your important phone numbers together so that they will be handy if you leave.
- Check-off items which will apply to your situation. See what will help you the most and concentrate on those items.
- Update your safety plan often. Review it with a supporter or counselor.
- Share your plan only with those who will absolutely support you.
- **DO NOT share your safety plan with anyone who may tell or "let it slip" to the abuser or friends/family of the abuser.**

Signs of Danger

Domestic abuse is common. Anyone who has experienced abuse needs to know that any of the following means their situation is becoming more dangerous.

- * Abuse is more frequent
- * There is a gun in the house
- * Abuser uses drugs such as cocaine or heroin
- * Abuser threatens to kill others
- * Abuser talks about suicide
- * Abuser is drinking more
- * Abuser hits you in front of other people
- * Abuser hurts or kills animals

When violence does seem close, avoid the kitchen, bathroom and rooms where you can be cornered. Begin action on your safety plan at any sign of trouble.



PACK YOUR ESCAPE BAG

Keeping these items in a bag or container away from home is best. Avoid using your purse or car.

- _____ Identification (driver's license, passport, green cards, work permits)
- _____ Birth certificates for yourself and children
- _____ Social Security cards for yourself and children
- _____ Extra car, house, storage, or other keys
- _____ Checkbook, ATM Card
- _____ Credit cards, bank books, Medicaid card, food stamps, insurance cards, etc.
- _____ Car registration
- _____ Car, health and life insurance papers
- _____ School and medical records
- _____ Divorce, custody or injunction papers
- _____ Proof of income for partner (check stub, completed income tax form)
- _____ Prepaid long distance card
- _____ Copies of bills you owe with your partner
- _____ Change of clothes for you and your children
- _____ Medicine and prescriptions (extra)
- _____ Personal hygiene products (tampons, toothbrushes, deodorant, shampoo, etc.)
- _____ Diapers, formula, toys, blankets
- _____ Pictures of children, jewelry, keepsakes
- _____ Extra Cash
- _____ Picture of abuser to show others
- _____ Copies of lease, rental agreement or house deed.

Safety Planning at Work

It is important for survivors of domestic violence to be alert and prepared for possible contacts by the abuser during a work day. A safety plan for work may help you if the abuser calls or shows up.

Tell your co-worker or boss about the situation and ask them to call the police in an emergency.

Have a photo of the abuser to show co-workers and security.

Have a backup person if the first one is not at work or not nearby.

Ask someone to screen your calls.

Ask someone to watch out for you.

Plan your entry and exit each day.

Keep a copy of your injunction at work.

Let others know about the injunction.

Request office or desk to be placed in a safe location.

Request help from employee assistance program.

Plan an escape route.

Have a signal for help, like a whistle or an alarm.

Drive a different way to and from work each day.

Find a safe room to use in an emergency. Be sure it locks, has a telephone and a window or second door.

Locate a parking space close to the door and in a well lighted place and walk with a security guard.

VEHICLE SAFETY

	Park your vehicle in well lit areas.
	When you are parked in your residential garage, turn the garage light on.
	Put locking caps on your gas tank.
	Visually check the front and rear passenger areas before entering your vehicle.
	Keep the door locked while your vehicle is in use.
	Be alert for vehicles following you.
	Know locations of police and fire stations.
	Use a different schedule and route each day that you travel.

**FREE
EMERGENCY CELL PHONES
ARE AVAILABLE
CALL 272-6472.**

If you receive calls from the abuser, keep a log of the date, time and contents of the call.

Save messages left on your answering machines and keep all letters/cards sent to you by the abuser. If you have an Injunction for Protection and receive calls from the abuser, report this to law enforcement as soon as possible.

TELEPHONE SAFETY

Using phone services or special devices may play a role in getting help or documenting threats.

Some telephone companies offer services that may help domestic violence survivors. These services may also be used by abusers to harass, stalk, threaten or find survivors. Most require phone company charges. Some of the services include:

Operator Assistance: Operators can dial police and other emergency numbers if you can't.

Voice Mail: Allows you to have a phone number and get messages without answering the phone.

Caller ID: Shows and records the numbers that call your phone.

Call Block Allows you to block selected phone numbers from calling you. However, it will not block cell phones and certain other types of lines.

Call Trace: Some areas may be able to check repetitive calls. This allows for outside documentation of violations of protective injunction and stalking.

Selective Call Blocking: Prevents your name and number from being displayed on Caller ID devices, one call at a time. Press *67, listen for the confirmation tone and then place your call. This service works on an individual call basis and once you hang up, the blocking is no longer in effect.

***69 Incoming Calls:** Dialing *69 on a touch tone phone or 1169 on a rotary phone gives you the date, time & number of the last call.

Collect calls and calls billed to another number: Use caution when making these calls. They can be traced. If calling the batterer, call from payphone out of your area. Consider buying a "prepaid" calling card.

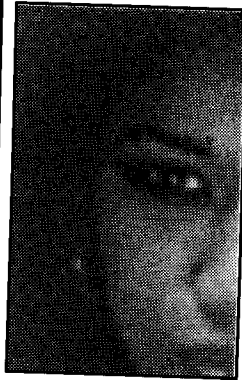
IMPORTANT

- Remember: the danger may get worse during an escape or just after leaving a violent relationship.
- Review your safety plan often and make changes as needed.
- If you move, try to keep the rent, phone and utilities out of your name.
- If you get an injunction and stay in your home, change the locks.
- Make sure all locks (doors and windows) and lights (inside and out) work properly. The Crime Prevention Unit of your local law enforcement agency may do a free inspection of your home.
- Install deadbolts or alarms on doors and windows. Install smoke alarms, metal doors or other safety items.
- Make sure there is adequate outside lighting.
- Get an unlisted phone number or change the old number. Tell family and friends not to give out your new number.
- Install a peep hole on your front door.
- Never automatically open the door until you are sure it is safe.
- If you arrive at home and find a window or door has been broken or opened do not go in! Call 911 and wait for the police to arrive.

SAFETY TIPS

- Teach children to dial 911 in an emergency.
- Get an Injunction for Protection. (Call 276-8100, ext. 7625 for information)
- Keep copies of the injunction orders at home, at work and in your purse.
- Have another person deliver and pick up children if a Judge orders visitation.
- Use a post office box instead of a street address. Check it during busy hours.
- Report suspicious things to the police, and file violations of the injunction as necessary.
- Keep a copy of the divorce, custody orders, etc., at school.
- Ask the school to call you about any contact by the abuser.
- Make the same arrangements with your child care or babysitters as above.
- Have your mail forwarded to another safe place. File a change of address card with the post office or on-line at www.usps.com.
- Talk to a shelter or Victim Assistance Program counselor about a confidential address program.
- Talk to a shelter or Victim Assistance Program counselor about possible relocation funds.
- Tape emergency numbers to all telephones in the home.

**If you know of someone
being abused, don't look the
other way.**



Let them know that
you are concerned and
offer to listen.

Respect their choices,
but encourage them to
talk with professionals
about safety issues.

Offer as much help as you can, but
don't take risks with your own
safety. Some examples of ways you
can help are: providing child care,
transportation, a place to stay, a job
or lending them money.

**Give them a copy of this
booklet.**

Some helpful websites:

State Attorney's Office: www.SAO13th.com

Dept. of Corrections: www.dc.state.fl.us.com

Jail Inquires: www.hcso.tampa.fl.us

Hills. County Gov't: www.hillsboroughcounty.org

Florida Gov't: www.myflorida.com

INFORMATION ABOUT THE ABUSER

Abuser's Name: _____

Address of someone who can reach him/her:

Phone #: _____

Social Security #: _____

Employer: _____

Phone: _____

Lawyer: _____

Phone: _____

Make of Car: _____

Year: _____ Color: _____

Tag #: _____

Other information (distinguishing marks/scars):

IMPORTANT NUMBERS FOR YOUR PERSONAL USE

Agency	Phone Number
Police or Sheriff's Office Office	911 (if available)
Victim Advocate or Domestic Violence Counselor	
Assisting Officer or Deputy	
Assistant State Attorney	
Injunction Office	276-8100, Ext. 7625

Helpful Phone Numbers

Non-Emergency

Hills. County Sheriff's Office	247-8000
Tampa Police Department	276-3200
Plant City Police Department	757-9200
Temple Terrace Police Department	989-7111
USF Police Department	974-2628
24-hour Jail Release Info.	1-800-398-3150

Legal

State Attorney's Office	272-5400
Domestic Violence Program	272-6423
Witness Aid Center	272-5050
Bay Area Legal Services	232-1343
Injunctions	276-8100, x7549
Victim Compensation	1-800-226-6667
24-Hour Court Case Info.	1-800-546-4951

24-Hour Crisis Hotlines

The SPRING (Shelter)	247-7233 (SAFE)
Abuse Registry for Children, Elderly or Disabled Adults	1-800-962-2873

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